

Canticle of Crib, Cross, Corona

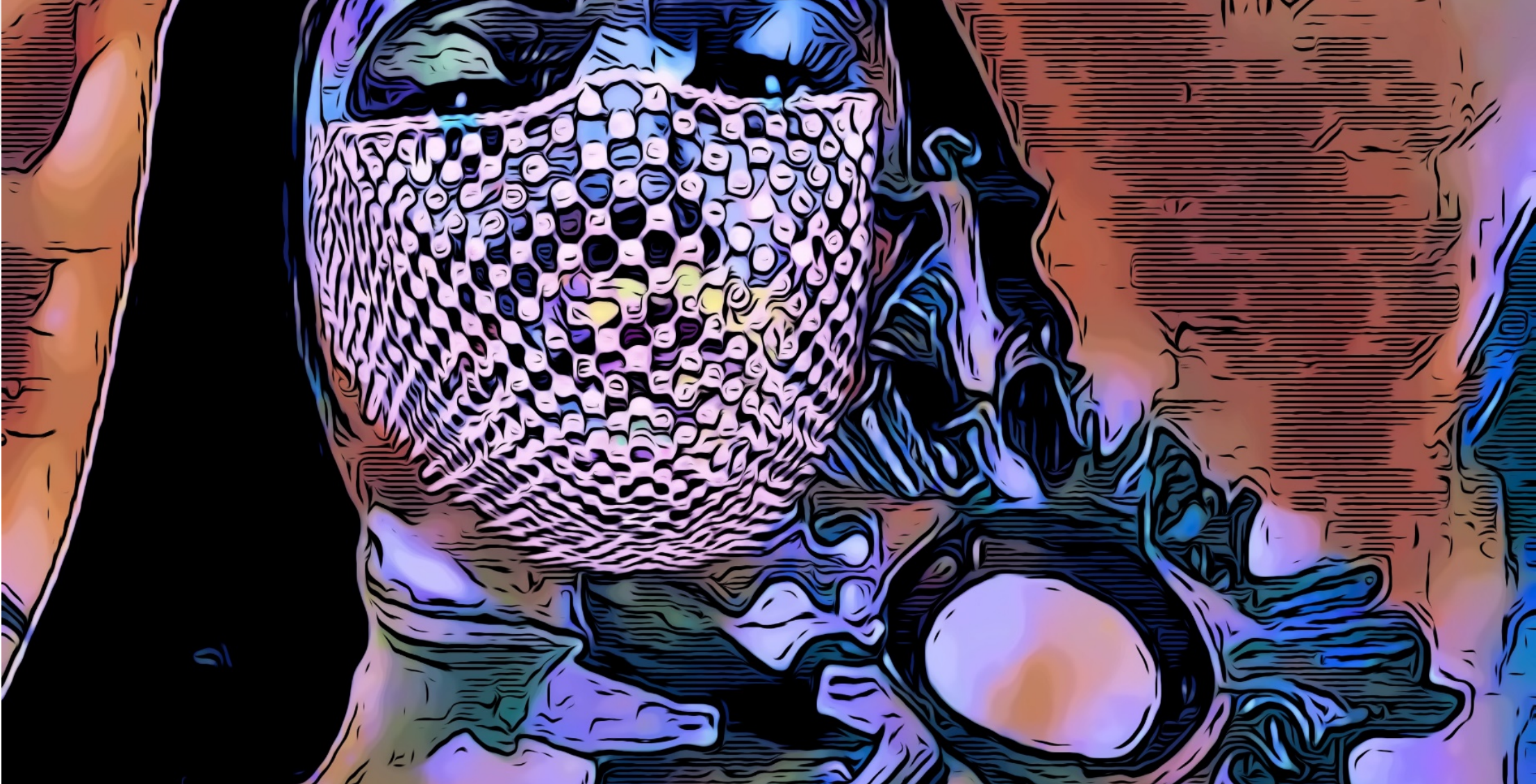
Sister Fran Gangloff, OSF



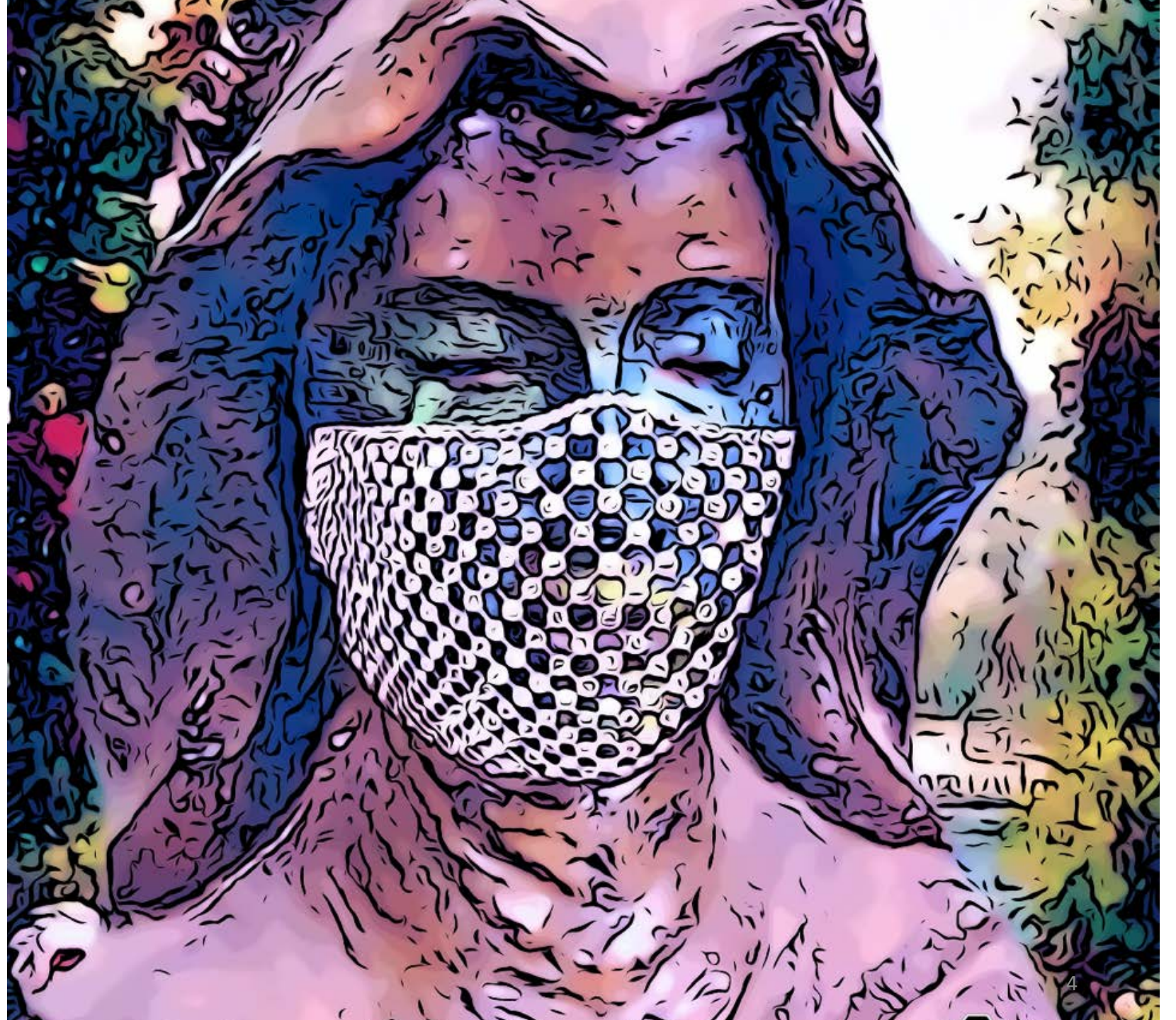
2020. The Summer of the Coronavirus.

Franciscans have long honored the Crib and the Cross as points of meditation in times of joy and sorrow.

Let us bring to our minds now Scenes of the Crib and Cross that bear on what we are experiencing as we live through and with Covid-19.

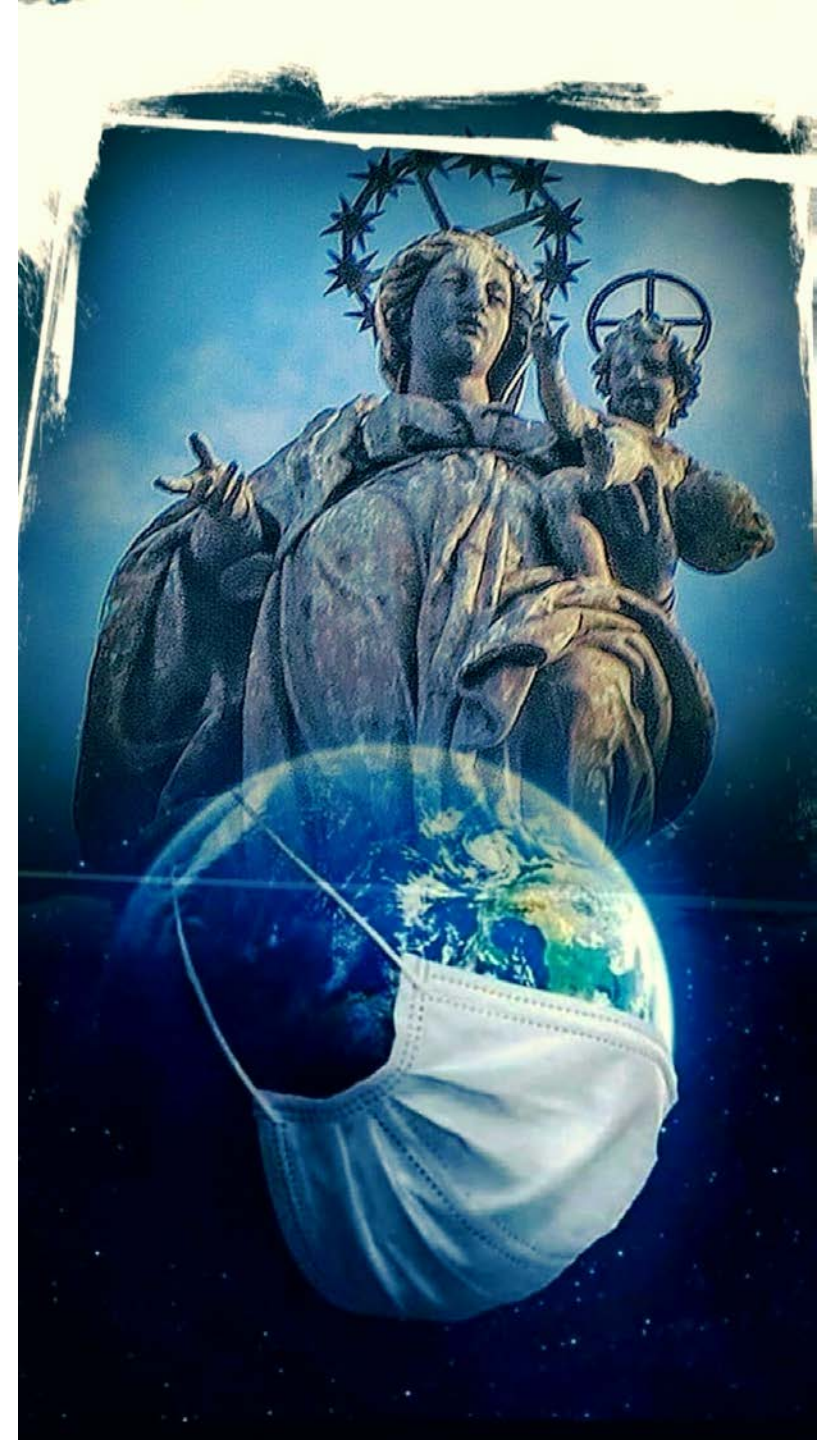



Crib



Let us pray:

We adore you,
O Christ,
and we praise you,
because by your Incarnation,
your Holy Crib,
you have transformed our World.





While we chafe and complain as we shelter in place
And have no visitors and stay home,
we call to mind Mary's journey to Ain Karim
and her trek with Joseph to Bethlehem
where Christ Jesus was born.

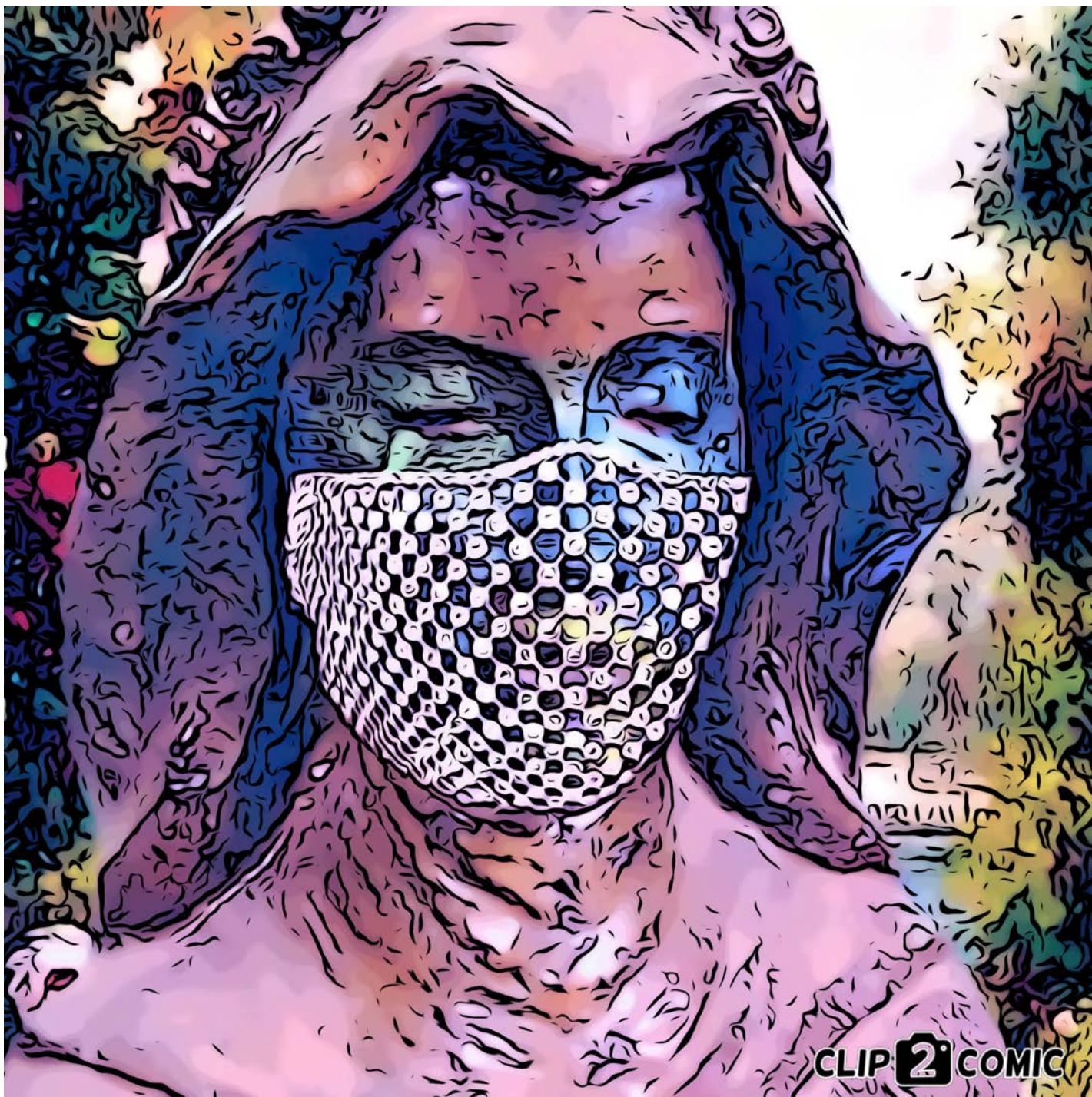
We wear the masks as the good, better, best ways
to limit the contagion of coronavirus,
to protect our neighbors as well as ourselves.

In Bethlehem, Mary swaddled
the Infant in cloth and love.

On Calvary, the soldiers stripped
Jesus of his garments.

We are adjusting to a “new normal”
with all the swaddling and stripping
that befalls us.

Colorful herbs and bright pretty flowers
decorate our Mother Earth
with joy and comfort for us in these troubled times.



Cross

Let us pray:

We adore you, O Christ
And we praise you,
Because by your Holy Cross
You have redeemed our world



As Christ Jesus
and his Mother exchanged
a longing and loving glance
on the Via Dolorosa,
we blow kisses
across the air
and wave signs of peace
across the aisle.

Sister Air and Clouds
and all kinds of weather
surround us as shelter
in this pandemic storm.





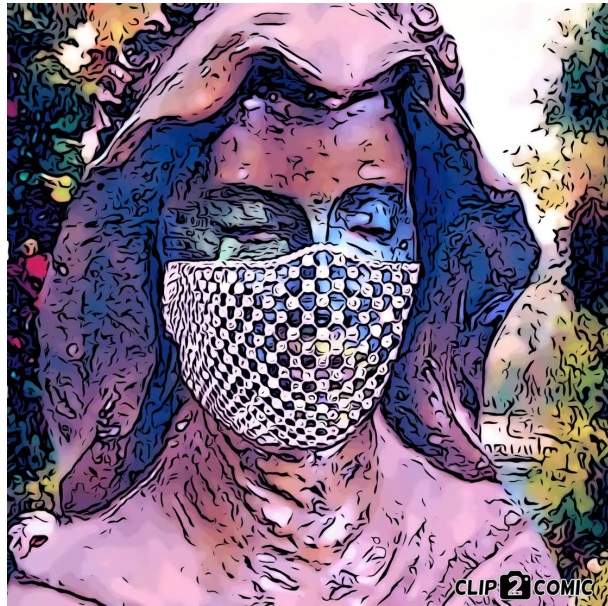
It's true.

The 12-year-old Christ got “lost” in the temple and the 33-year-old Christ fell three times as he ascended Mount Calvary.

Many of us feel lost, take a tumble, get overwhelmed by the news of the rise and fall of new cases and so many deaths from the virus. Lockdowns and closings and slow reopening test our resolve, our flexibility, our adaptability.



Veronica offered her Veil
to minister to
the Holy Face of Christ.



We don our masks
as sacred pieces of cloth.
We put on a brave face
and a noble heart.
We keep six feet distances
as a precaution.

We regret that
some did not do this soon enough
and the pandemic spread like wildfire.



Brother Fire, ever playful and robust,
teach us to find strength
and courage and gratitude.

On the Via Dolorosa,
Lord Jesus, you took time to speak to
the women of Jerusalem.

Speak now, please, to every one of us
as we learn new ways of togetherness
in times of aloneness and solitude.

Help us learn Zoom and Facebook,
WhatsApp and WWF - Words with Friends.

Help us again use email
and old-fashioned mail, and phone calls.
Let us be creative,
like Francis and Clare,
who wrote letters
when they could not visit in person.

Let us consider pen pals and Facetime
as we reach out to others.

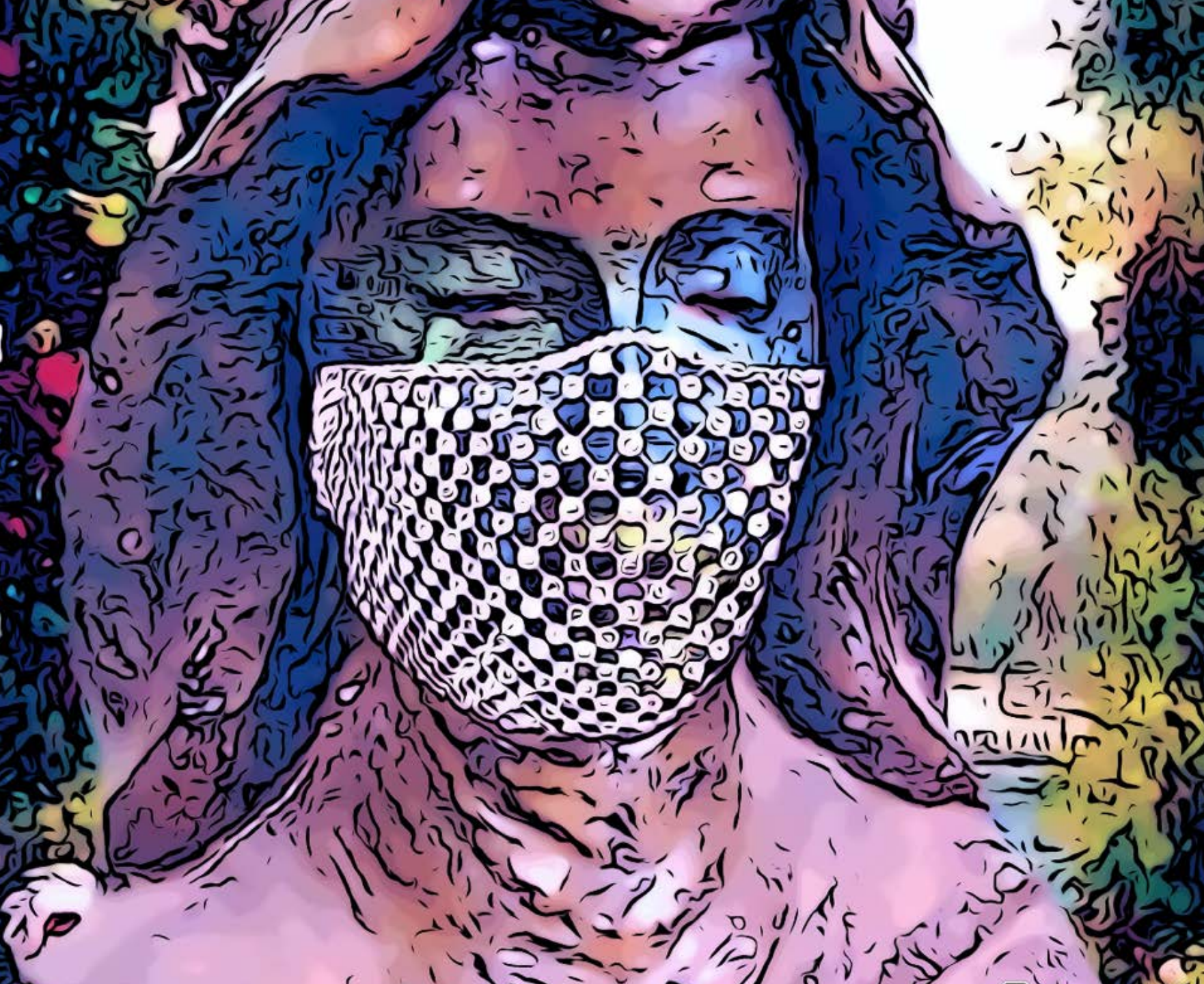
Joseph in Bethlehem held the Holy Infant in his arms.
On the Via Dolorosa, Simon lent his hands
to helping Christ Jesus carry the Cross.

Both serve as models of mercy
for the medical helpers and first responders
who tend to those ill with Covid-19.


They see some through to death
and others to recovery and going home.

And those who provide the PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
and those who research vaccine solutions and recovery meds.

We recall how St. Marianne Cope gave her life
to be in isolation with the suffering people of Molokai.



Corona



Let us pray:
We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you,
because
by your Sheltering Presence
during this Coronavirus
Pandemic,
you care for
the whole wide World.

The way of the Coronavirus began late 2019 and its rapid worldwide spread took us by storm and surprise as an unseen malicious enemy.

It came not as wind at our windows or knocks at our door but as a silent intruder, yes, and as invitation too, to an acceptance like Mary's at Gabriel's invite and to Jesus as he faced condemnation to death.

With deep faith and renewed hope,
we say Yes - to masks and distancing
and to washing hands
and disinfecting surfaces.

Sister Water, so pure and clear,
bless our washings and distancing.

Sister Stars and Moon,
by your kindly light
in the encircling gloom
of no Masses, no Sacraments, and of so many -
Oh - so many things we missed and still miss.



This Pandemic of 2020 saddened our hearts
when a loved one died away from loved ones - alone -
and yet together in the Communion of Saints
and Clouds of Witnesses
and Choirs of Angels.

Many of us had no funeral services
for these loved ones,
No gathering together
for our mourning and grieving.

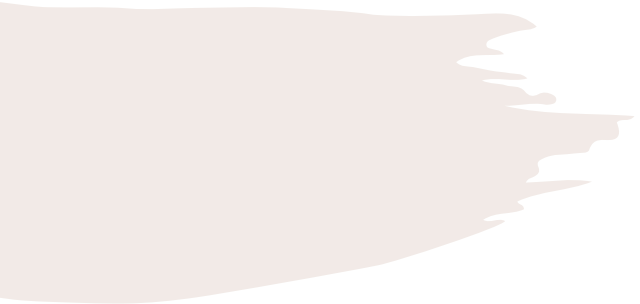


Coronavirus wraps us
in lamentations and restrictions and yet,
we hold our hearts in hope
that a new normal will flourish
like a morning star in days to come.

Brother Sun,
shine on us with your Vitamin D
which is preventative
and curative against the virus.



May Christ Jesus,
In his Crib,
In his Cross,
and in his Sheltering
from Coronavirus
bless us
with Peace.





Credits for “Crib, Cross, Corona”

Outdoor Stations of the Cross
moved from Millvale, Pennsylvania
to Williamsville, New York
at Gethsemane Cemetery
of Forest Lawn Cemeteries, 2019.

Text and Digital Artwork by
Sister Fran Gangloff, OSF.

